

## SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE NEWS SUNDAY 29 NOVEMBER 2015

Good morning and welcome to the weekly news bulletin of the South African Radio League read by .. [your name, call sign and QTH]

You can tune into the South African Radio League news bulletin on Sunday mornings at 08:15 Central African Time in Afrikaans and at 08:30 Central African Time in English on HF and on many VHF and UHF repeaters around the country. Echolink listeners can connect to ZS0JPL for a relay. A podcast is available from the League's web site.

This audio bulletin may be downloaded from the League's website at [www.sarl.org.za](http://www.sarl.org.za). You will find this bulletin and previous bulletins in text format under the news link on the left-hand side of the web page. While you are there, you can sign up to receive future bulletins by e-mail.

In the news today

### DECEMBER IS YOUTH ON THE AIR MONTH

### THE SPORADIC-E SEASON OPENS IN THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE

### CALLING ALL PROSPECTIVE HAMNET MEMBERS

Stay tuned for more on these and other interesting news items.

\*\*\*\* From Tuesday, December 1 to December 31, 2015, it is time again for the annual Youth On The Air event, and YOTA stations will attempt to make many contacts worldwide with each other, so this is a golden opportunity to get young amateurs in their teens and early 20s active with their counterparts on the air.

Please remember that this is not a formal contest, but a way to get youngsters on the air and to let them realize that there are hundreds of other youngsters around the world that feel just the same as they do about the hobby. The main aim is to get youngsters on the air and to make contact with other youngsters all over the world.

Don't get the wrong idea, working a pile up has just as many benefits; just understand that it's primarily to get YOUNGSTERS on the air.

This is an excellent opportunity for clubs to run a demonstration at a local school or to get together with our amateur friends at the club and show-case this great hobby to our South African youth!

Please note that the ZS9YOTA call sign is registered as an educational call sign and may be used by ANY person under the age of 26. If a person under 26 does not have a call sign (in other words is not a licensed radio amateur), he/she is allowed to use the ZS9YOTA call sign, as long as he does it under supervision of a fully licensed radio amateur.

If you are 25 years old or younger, you are invited to apply to use the special call sign either as an individual or as a club station operated by young people. Send your request to Koos ZR6KF at [koosfick096@gmail.com](mailto:koosfick096@gmail.com) or alternatively

to Nico, ZS6QL, at [zs6ql@mweb.co.za](mailto:zs6ql@mweb.co.za) - they will also provide you with much more information and answer any questions.

All related information is available on the SARL website and at [www.hamradio.org.za](http://www.hamradio.org.za)  
Enjoy many local and DX contacts all you youngsters out there!

\*\*\*\* Unpredictable and strong 50 MHz openings could occur in the southern hemisphere during December and January months. This occurs when the MUF in the E-layer rises up to 100 MHz, or when it reaches 200 MHz then Es contacts on 144 MHz are also possible as recorded in Australia, New Zealand and South America.

In the past many Es contacts were made on 50 MHz FM and SSB from Gauteng to Port Elizabeth and Cape Town, as well as from Durban to Cape Town. The two ZS6DN beacons at Irene were excellent indicators of Es openings on 50 and 144 MHz, including meteor bursts.

Unlike Australia and New Zealand, openings on 50 MHz in the RSA have been very sparse in recent years and this can be traced to the fact that 50 MHz beacons are all pointing North for TEP as well as the lack of monitoring, and amateurs therefore would miss any Es openings.

Sporadic-E openings on 50 MHz in South Africa usually occurred from 08:30 to 11:00 CAT and sometimes also in the afternoons. DX Es-openings North to Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Mid-Africa were recorded around midday, and even South between Port Elizabeth and Marion Island around midnight. Es openings on 50 MHz are more frequent, nevertheless. VK and ZL stations have made many long distance contacts on 144 MHz too, during the 2014/2015 Es season. Since Sporadic-E is unpredictable, an early alert can only come from a 50 MHz beacon outside the skip distance of 500-600 km, which is increased to 800-900 km on 144 MHz.

An appeal is made to those 50 MHz beacon operators in Krugersdorp, Polokwane and Rosh Pinah in Namibia, to please turn their beacon antennas South for the duration of the Sporadic-E season.

\*\*\*\* Following on from last week's campaign to get you all interested in joining Hamnet and proving your worth to your community, the South African Radio League challenges you to volunteer your skills. There is a Regional Director for each Hamnet Division within our nine provinces; most of them are well-known amateurs in their areas. If you do not know who they are, and know nobody in your area who is already a Hamnet member and can tell you, please contact Dave at [zs1dfr@telkomsa.net](mailto:zs1dfr@telkomsa.net), and he will give you the details of the best person for you to contact.

Hamnet has a CD of useful information for you, with advice on voice procedures, pro-words to be used for specific messages or actions, frequencies of choice for emergency communications, and lots of other useful advice. All divisions hold meetings, and some run courses for new members to become acquainted with the protocols. You may be trained to help secure a helicopter-landing zone when

injured patients need to be transported. In addition, if you have other skills, such as 4x4 experience or mountaineering skills, you may teach us as much as we can teach you.

Various items of Hamnet clothing are available in each division, including reflective jackets and headgear, as well as harnesses for holding your handheld radio and cell phone near at hand during activations.

Hamnet has something for everybody, so don't delay - contact your regional director, or ZS1DFR at the email address [zs1dfr@telkomsa.net](mailto:zs1dfr@telkomsa.net).

You are listening to a news bulletin of the South African Radio League.

\*\*\*\* Applications for membership of the SARL have been received from the following persons:

. ZSL1143 Johann le Roux . ZSL1144 Marie Grobbelaar . WW6MM Mike A Marin (application sent to ICASA for ZS6MAM - reserved)

The following clubs have submitted applications for affiliation. ZS5ZU Hammies Amateur Radio Club (KZN)

Any objections to the acceptance of the applications must reach the Secretary before or on the Tuesday after the bulletin.

Membership of the SARL currently stands at 1588 plus 41 affiliated clubs

\*\*\*\* In this week's propagation report Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is expected to be at low levels. Active Sunspot 2457 has a complex magnetic configuration and may produce M-class solar flares.

If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around 58.

The 20 to 10 m bands will provide lots DX fun, especially around sunrise and sunset.

Please visit the website [spaceweather.sansa.org.za](http://spaceweather.sansa.org.za) for further information.

\*\*\*\*The SARL ARiA frequency counter kit is now available by mail order or collection from the National Amateur Radio centre. There are two mail order options, via Postnet or post office small parcel service with tracking number.

Get yourself a great Christmas present. SARL members can take off a further 10% of the member price of the kit which is R550 if you order before 5 December 2015, so save a further R55 over the non-member price of R800. Get the order form on [www.sarl.org.za](http://www.sarl.org.za)

The frequency counter exhibits several interesting features, like a maximum working frequency above 40 MHz, a 10 Hz resolution, low consumption (15 mA) and is easy to build. It is the ideal weekend project. The design is simple, given that most of the functions are implemented by the microprocessor which is supplied pre-programmed.

For those who want to use the basic unit above the normal HF frequencies, space for a pre-scalar IC circuit is on the PCB layout and in the Schematic layout. This IC is not included in the basic kit but can be ordered at an additional cost. This kit is ideal to meet the requirements of the amateur radio regulations which require that every amateur has a reliable method of measuring the transmit frequency.

\*\*\*\*The new date for the 5 MHz weekend is now 5th and 6th of December 2015. Details will be available on the SARL web from Monday.

\*\*\*\*The new 2016 ARRL Handbook is now available from the SA Amateur Radio Development Trust book store. Stocks are limited and considering the poor Rand/Dollar exchange rate the books are available at a marginally increased price over the 2015 version. Also now available is a McGraw Hill book: Arduino Projects for Amateur Radio. Details and order forms can be downloaded from [www.amateurradio.org.za](http://www.amateurradio.org.za)

\*\*\*\* And now for the diary of events

1st Dec Start of YOTA month 5th & 6th Dec 5 MHz weekend 6th Dec  
SARL digital contest 10th Dec last day for RAE examination centres and HF  
Assessors' registration 12th & 13th Dec ARRL 10m contest

To end today's bulletin a look at the important news for the day.

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You are welcome to join us every Sunday morning for the weekly amateur radio magazine programme 'Amateur Radio Today' at 10:00 Central African Time. The programme can be heard on VHF and UHF repeaters countrywide and on 7 082 kHz lower side-band and on 7 205 kHz and 17 760 kHz AM. There is also a podcast available from Dick Stratford, ZS6RO. A rebroadcast can be heard on Monday evenings at 18:30 Central African Time on 3 230 kHz AM.

We welcome your signal reports, comments and suggestions; send these by e-mail to [artoday@sarl.org.za](mailto:artoday@sarl.org.za). Sentech sponsors the radio transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a news bulletin compiled by Etienne Naude, ZS6EFN, edited by Dick Stratford, ZS6RO and read by Dave Reece, ZS1DFR.

Thank you for listening

From the entire news team, best wishes for the week ahead.

73  
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